(a) whether the coir board has undertaken any new promotional plan for its products;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount allocated for various promotional activities during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) Coir Board undertakes promotional measures for its products under various Plan schemes such as Domestic Market Development, Export Promotion, Trade Information System, support for training infrastructure technology transfer, Mahila Coir Yojana, support to brown fibre sector and Research and Development.

The Plan schemes of Coir Board aim at substantial growth in the production of coir fibre, facilities to process the coir fibre and coir pith into value added products and expansion of market for coir products in India and abroad, contributing better employment to the existing workers and generation of additional employment and higher income to all in the Coir Industry.

The thrust of the Research & Development Programmes is on modernisation, quality upgradation, product diversification, new product development and improved productivity which would result in higher wages and better standard of living for the workers engaged in the industry and growth of economy in coir producing States and growth in foreign exchange earning of the Nation. Finding new markets for coir both within the country and outside and new uses and applications for this natural fibre has also been accorded top priority. Training cum employment and providing fuller employment to the workers and assistance for modernisation are other areas of importance in the present proposals.

(c) Budget allocation for Plan schemes of Coir Board for the last three years are :

	(Rs. in lakhs)
1993-94	570.00
1994-95	570.00
1995-96	690.00

Setting up of Coffee Processing Unit by Coffee Board in Kerala

127. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to start a coffee processing unit in Kerala by the Coffee Board;

(b) whether the Government of Kerala has made any request to the Union Government for setting up such units;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the estimated cost of the units; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Technology Upgradation Fund

128. SHRI B.L. SHANKAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a technology upgradation fund for textiles sector during the Ninth Plan period;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the criteria of its distribution; and

(c) the extent to which it is likely to help to boost the export of textiles ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) : (a) to (c) A proposal is under consideration to facilitate modernisation, through technological upgradation of the textile industry. The intended objective is to improve production and productivity of the Indian textile industry to make it more competitive, including in the export market. Details of the Scheme are yet to be worked out.

Civilian Armed Forces for Income Tax Raids

129. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI
KUNWAR SARVARAJ SINGH :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Income Tax authorities have demanded for a separate special civilian armed force to assist them during Income Tax raids;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken to protect the life and properties of officials entrusted with the duties of Income Tax raids ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c) All necessary steps are taken for the security of the officials engaged in search duties. Since 'law and order' is a State subject, armed ploice force is provided by various State Governments for the security of the I.T. search parties. Besides, sufficient number of operational vehicles and communication equipments have been provided to all Directorates for increasing safety and efficiency of the officials engaged in searches.

Assistance to Coir Industry

130. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal from Government of Kerala for getting assistance for the Coir Industry in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government are aware that Coir Industry is facing problems;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and